

LIVESTOCK



CATTLE AND CALVES

New Mexico's inventory of all cattle and calves as of January 1, 2001 was 1.58 million head, down 3.7 percent from the 1.64 million from a year ago. Beef cow inventory fell 2.7 percent from January of 2000, to 549,000 head. Ranchers maintained 90,000 heifers for beef cow replacement, 10 percent below the previous year. Milk cow numbers continued to climb in New Mexico as the January 1, 2001, milk cow inventory increased 11 percent from the previous year, totaling 261,000 head. Dairy producers kept 50,000 dairy heifers for replacement, 9.1 percent below last year. The inventory of steers weighing 500 pounds and over decreased 20,000 head from last year to 180,000. Bulls on hand remained at 50,000 head. The 2000 calf crop, including both beef and dairy calves, was estimated at 630,000 head, the same as a year earlier. Calves on hand totaled 270,000 head, compared to 300,000 on hand January 1, 2000. Cattle and calves on full feed for slaughter on January 1, 2001 fell to 115,000 head, 1,000 fewer than a year earlier. The 2000 gross income from cattle and calves increased 25 percent to \$924 million.

RANGE AND PASTURE FEED

Range and pastures were dry through the first part of the year with conditions ranging from very poor to good. Soil moisture levels were well below normal through May causing ranchers to supplemental feed and haul water to livestock. Typical summer rains improved conditions to mostly poor to good, but rain percentages remained below normal for much of the state. Conditions again deteriorated in the fall as warmer temperatures and lack of rain decreased the amount of feed available on pastures.

DAIRY

State dairy producers continued to expand the number of milk cows during the year averaging 250,000 head, up 8 percent from 1999. Milk production in 2000 was again at a record high of 5.24 billion pounds, up 11 percent from a year earlier when 4.72 billion pounds were produced. Milk production per cow, at 20,944 pounds, was up 582 pounds from last year and ranks the State fifth among the 20 major milk producing states. Despite rising production, gross income dropped to \$646 million due to the drop in milk prices.

SHEEP AND LAMBS

Sheep and lambs inventory as of January 1, 2001 totaled 255,000 head, down 12 percent from a year earlier. The number of breeding sheep decreased 30,000 head to 200,000 head during the year. Market sheep and lambs dropped 8.3 percent to 55,000 head. The 2000 lamb crop, at 155,000 head, was 3.1 percent below the previous year. Producer gross income increased 32 percent to \$11.3 million as a result of increased marketings and prices. Wool was sheared from 255,000 sheep and lambs, producing 2.12 million pounds. Value of wool produced, rose 6.1 percent to \$1.38 million, as the average price of wool increased to 65 cents per pound.